RECIPES FOR NEUTRALITY by Sidney B. Fay

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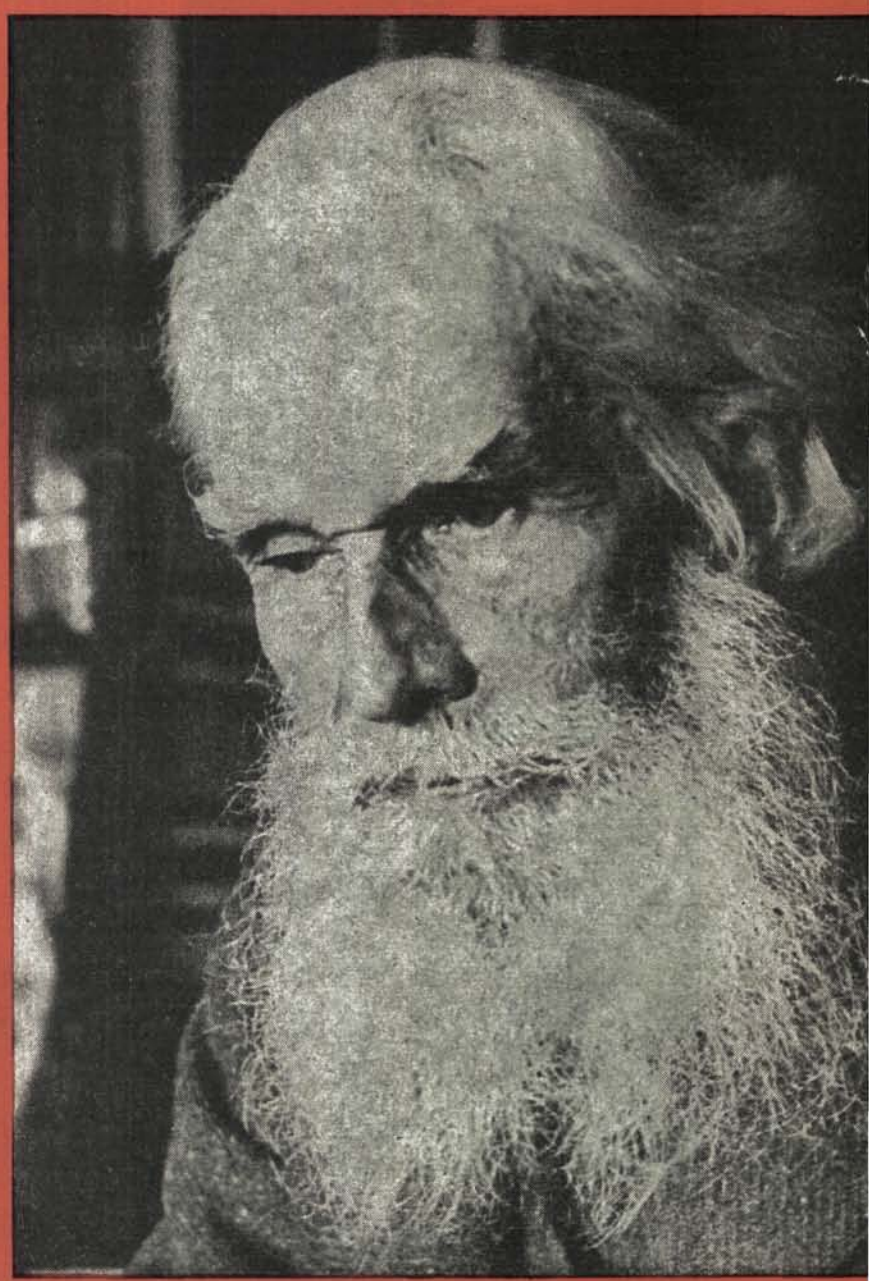

Paul

HAVELOCK ELLIS "set out to write a 'Pilgrim's Progress of the Soul.' . . . It is in no particular the kind of autobiography one expected" . . . *(See page 10)*

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Recipes for Neutrality*

BY SIDNEY B. FAY

International News

President Wilson leading the Preparedness Parade in Washington, June 15, 1916. (From "Road to War" by Walter Millis.)

THE great majority of the American people desire and are determined that their country shall keep out of the present European war. This desire is indicated by President Roosevelt's speeches interpreting American opinion, by endless debates in Congress, by the Gallup polls, and by other evidence. But the American people are divided in opinion as to how neutrality can best be preserved. Many naturally appeal to history, and especially to their own private interpretation of American policy from 1914 to 1917. Their conclusion is that we must be on the alert to the dangers, and must prevent the tendencies and policies, which landed us in war in 1917. Unfortunately, the appeal to the history of American neutrality of a quarter of a century ago results in very different conclusions. The doctors disagree.

President Seymour, whose "American Diplomacy during the World War" was one of the first and best books on the subject, believed that Germany's submarine policy was the primary cause of our being entangled. He was doubtful about the wisdom of automatic isolationist measures for mandatory embargoes announced beforehand. He rightly thought the best hope of our keeping out of war was to take steps in coöperation with other states to prevent war from breaking out at all. But as we are now again faced by actual war and the submarine danger, this hope is at present vain.

Eminent international lawyers, like Professor J. B. Moore, Professor Edwin M. Borchard, and Mr. W. P. Lage, think that we should return to a strict insistence on our rights and duties under international law as it existed before the World War. The trouble here is that with the coming of the submarine and other developments during the World War, conditions arose for which there was no real provision under the old international law. Much of what had been regarded as international law disappeared in the crucible of war. Consequently most persons today reject the Moore-Borchard recipe and incline to agree with Mr. Grattan's statement that "it is simply silly to say that the safest course for a neutral nation is to rely on the established principles of international law in time of war."

Another school of writers, who have become vociferous during the past three years, insist that we were bulldozed into war by the shrewd and pervasive propaganda of the Allies. This insidious influence must be exposed to prevent us from having the wool fatally pulled over our eyes a second time. One of the first books to put this vigorously was Mr. Grattan's debunking volume of 1929, "Why We Fought." More recently it was emphasized by Walter Millis in "Road to War," by C. C. Tansill in "America Goes to War," and by H. C. Peterson in "Propaganda for War." Mr. Grattan himself returns to the charge in "The Deadly Parallel" just published, in which he exposes "every item in the bag of propaganda tricks" used by the British in the years 1914-1917. He quotes as a warning Sidney Rogerson's "Propaganda in the Next War." He says, "the pro-war propagandists will stop at nothing in order to gain a victory."

It is the present writer's conviction that these authors have considerably exaggerated the influence of Allied propaganda in bringing us into war in 1917. We have been given such an overdose of propaganda against propaganda that we shudder at shadows. We have even become over-skeptical and over-suspicious. Mr. Grattan himself seems over-suspicious when he writes about President Roosevelt. Mr. J. D. Squires has made one of the most careful and sane studies, "British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917". We may well accept his conclusion: "British propaganda was not *the* cause for American entrance into the World War. But it was *a* cause, and a powerful one." Perhaps the overdose of propaganda against propaganda has not been an altogether bad thing, for we have had our eyes so opened that there is no great danger that the Allies can again pull the wool over them, and German propaganda is so clumsy that, as twenty-five years ago, there is little danger from it.

More or less identical with these exploiters of the propagandist influence in 1914-1917 are the proponents of "economic motives." They likewise exaggerate the influence on President Wilson and Congress of the big bankers, the munition-makers, the profits from Wall Street war babies and war loans, and the economic tie-up resulting from all sorts of Allied purchases in this country. This school fortified itself with great arguments after 1936 from the much publicized "exposures" of the Nye Commission. The arguments were popularized by the pacifists, by Millis and Tansill, by the late H. C. Engelbrecht's "Merchants of Death," and by a whole flood of magazine articles about the dark and

THE DEADLY PARALLEL. By C. Hartley Grattan. New York: Stackpole Sons. 1939. 210 pp. $2.

CAN AMERICA STAY NEUTRAL? By Allen W. Dulles and Hamilton Fish Armstrong. New York: Harper & Bros. 1939. 277 pp., with index. $2.50.

Next Week

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH ECONOMICS?
By W. O. SCROGGS

LAND BELOW THE WIND
By AGNES NEWTON KEITH
Reviewed by Kathrene Pinkerton

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nefarious doings of the bankers and munition-makers. But here again the reviewer is convinced that these writers are over-emphasizing the influence exerted by the economic motive in bringing about American participation in 1917. No doubt McAdoo had more influence than Bryan. No doubt people who bought Allied bonds did not want to lose their investment through the possibility of Allied defeat. No doubt the cotton-farmers, wheat-growers, copper-miners, and munition-makers were interested in the victory of the side that they were supplying so profitably to themselves. But it is a mistake to exaggerate these economic motives and leave out of sight other and more potent factors to be mentioned below.

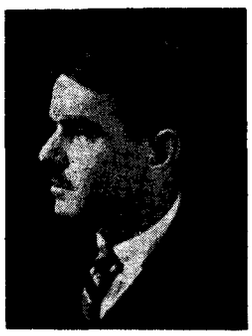
Part of the popular success which this economic school has enjoyed is owing to the fact that it can point with more truth to the unwholesome economic after-effects of the war boom. To people suffering from the depression which began to engulf us after 1929, it is pleasant to find a scapegoat and see the blame pinned on the bankers and munition-makers. The condemnation of Wilsonian neutrality which failed to keep us out of war is further applauded because of his failure to win the peace, and because of the disastrous course of European history since Versailles. Hence the wide acceptance of the views of the economic school who insist that we should adopt a neutrality policy which would avoid another unhealthy war boom; that we should develop our own internal market at home and be less concerned about our trade abroad; and that we should follow what Professor Charles A. Beard says about "Giddy Minds and Foreign Quarrels." We should be what Mr. Grattan describes in his chapter on "Continental Americans":

> A Continental American today is a person who believes in a strong continental American domestic program rather than an imperialist program, whether of the Roman, British, or Walter Lippmann variety. His point of view is not autarchic. He is not against international trade; he is not against international coöperation for peaceful purposes; he is not hostile to foreign nations in general or in principle; and he cares deeply about the future of humanity. He is not an "isolationist" in the black sense of the word as war-mongers use it. Continental Americans are opposed to the imperialist policy which . . . led —when dressed up in fancy moral precepts—to Woodrow Wilson's crusade to Europe in 1917.

On an earlier page he finds little difference between Nazi and Allied imperialism:

> Nazi imperialism has come into head-on collision with British and French imperialism. The resulting war is an imperialist war, a straight-out struggle to capture the power to rule Europe. It is unsound to deracinate fascism; it is a propaganda dodge. Nazi fascism grew out of capitalist property relations, depressed social conditions, the idea of unlimited national sovereignty—the whole complex of modern Europe.

These views of the economic school, which followed in the wake of the Nye Commission, together with the increasingly threatening situation in Europe and Asia, with various undeclared wars, resulted in the passage of our so-called Neutrality Acts. This is a misnomer, as Dulles and Armstrong rightly point out in "Can America Stay Neutral?" These laws should be called legislation to restrict American commerce in time of war, or American policy legislation, or peace legislation. Senator Pitman was on the right track when he introduced into the Senate, in March, 1939, his abortive proposal and stated in the preamble that it should be referred to as the "Peace Act of 1939." Our Neutrality Laws have been on the statute books for decades and are determined by the technical legal dictates of general international law applying to all nations. If we add supplementary legislation embargoing munitions, demanding cash-and-carry, etc., to keep us from being involved in war, this is peace, or American policy, legislation. Thus, when the present war broke out, President Roosevelt had to issue two proclamations, one for the enforcement of our Neutrality Laws, and one for the enforcement of the supplementary legislation restricting our commerce in the interests of an American peace policy.



Kaiden Kazanjian

Hamilton Fish Armstrong

Before examining what peace legislation Congress should now adopt, just a word further on American policy from 1914 to 1917 and the lessons to be drawn from it. The reasons for American participation in 1917 are very complex. Each one of a hundred million people was actuated by somewhat different motives, and each varied somewhat in his own feeling as new situations continually arose. People did not always find it easy to analyze precisely even their own motives. A man's motives are known only to himself and his Maker, and, as modern psychology teaches, not always to himself. How can any one confidently say that it was Allied propaganda, or the economic motive, or any other one thing that mainly got us into war in 1917? Furthermore, to determine precisely why we went to war it would be necessary to distinguish carefully the motives of, and the influence exercised by, President Wilson, his advisers, senators and congressmen, and the whole people collectively and individually. Our entrance into the war was the resultant of a vast complex of forces. Nevertheless, if one may be so rash as to venture a rough general estimate in the briefest of space, the main factors which led us into war might be grouped under six somewhat overlapping heads. Arranging them from the most decisive first, to the least decisive last, they would be something like this:

1. The disregard of American rights involved in the German submarine policy. German disregard of our rights was felt by American sentiment to be more serious than Allied disregard, because the former killed American men, women, and children who could never be brought to life, while the latter merely interfered with American property rights for which compensation could be made.

2. The German methods in beginning and conducting the war: German militarism; support of Austria in July, 1914; invasion of neutral Belgium; severities or "atrocities" which were caused by the panicky feeling of German officers in Belgium and Northern France but which were often deplored by German soldiers, as we know from their captured diaries; deportation of Belgians to forced labor in Germany; introduction of poison gas; blowing up of American bridges and munition plants; and finally the Zimmermann Note with its *spurlos versenkt* and proposed incitement of Mexico.

3. Anglo-Saxon tradition and sentiment, and native American idealism. The more influential Americans, including of course the President and most of his advisers, as well as the great majority of the newspapers, were pro-English by inheritance and tradition. Through Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Dickens, and a thousand others we had become accustomed to think in much the same terms as our English forefathers. Except for some Irish elements and some naval circles, we had forgotten 1776 and 1812 by 1914, and were more receptive to

(*Continued on page* 16)

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How to Avoid Extermination

THE FATE OF MAN. By H. G. Wells. New York: Alliance Book Corporation. 1939. 263 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JACQUES BARZUN

OF all the books on Democracy, Freedom, and the world crisis, H. G. Wells's latest is the most comprehensive and the most powerful. It ranges freely over the war-torn planet, yet it is a short book, wholly unpedantic and written with true eloquence—witness the chapter on the British Empire. A mass of facts, derived from much reading, is digested, organized, and interpreted to support a single theme, which is that unless the world reshapes its "mental superstructure, its knowledge, idea, and habit system," mankind is doomed to extinction as helplessly as the pterodactyl and as absurdly as the dodo.

Mr. Wells's insistence on the importance of ideas, on the necessity of a World Brain utilizing a world encyclopedia, is not a new one with him, but he has never before made it sound so imperative, either in his own attempts at encyclopedic history, economics, and biology or in his former fantasies and forebodings. He shows now, with a style as fresh as that of "Anticipations" and "Tono-Bungay," that we must think new thoughts or fail to adapt our species to the conditions created by science and invention in the last hundred and fifty years. He first examines the great thought systems competing in the modern world. Britain, Germany, Japan, Italy, Russia, France, and the United States are scoured over at a pace and with a sharpness of eye that suggest Swift and Voltaire, to which is added an emotional touch that is Wells's own. After the feeble "Croquet Player," this is a rejuvenated Wells, a true master of thought and expression, unencumbered by optimism or pessimism, whose wit shines as brightly as his blows fall hard.

Is he then still ahead of us, while we who are younger but no less anxious grope in the "blinkered ignorance" he derides? Certainly, general agreement with his purposely "unsubtle" philosophy would change the present face of the world and change it for the better. But there is one flaw in his close reasoning that seems to me fatal to his conclusions. The "biological" stand which he loves to take for judging man's fate may readily be granted him, but it leads him so persistently into science-worship, nay, Darwin-worship, that one could outline right now the disillusioned book Wells himself would write twenty-five years after the world had accepted his new dogma. He does not see, in other words, that it is the use and the quality of ideas that shape the world we live in, and not their mere contents. He tilts at the great world religions, at priestcraft and monarchy, for their contents. He ridicules the notion of original sin and yet admires and uses Freud, failing to perceive that there are on the one hand fanatical Freudians whose intolerant dogmatism is identical with the Christian literalism Wells combats; and on the other, true Christians who find original sin and the Christian epic congenial forms for their thoroughly modern perception of man's lot. And in the meantime, Wells's scientists have long since shown all the signs of becoming a priestcraft, learned, self-righteous, oppressive. That this is not universally true proves again the need of distinguishing the quality of belief.

One therefore comes away from this book with a renewed sense of even great men's inability to transcend the prevailing forms of thought, not of their times, but of their early intellectual maturity. The fact that Wells studied under the great Huxley is indelible, just as we shall be branded by having studied under Freud or Campbell or I. A. Richards. They will likewise fossilize our lesser minds unless we keep ever before us the fact that ideas are instruments, the skill and end to which we put them making the only possible difference in the outcome. With this reservation, Wells's book remains a synthetic achievement of no mean order. Its negative purport—barring some exaggerations—is tremendous. But the "slim hope" which he offers after all his debunking of absolutes is only another factitious absolute.

Blood and Dust

THE TRAMPLING HERD. By Paul I. Wellman. New York: Carrick & Evans. 1939. 433 *pp., with index.* $3.

THE GREAT WESTERN TRAIL. By Clinton Parks Lampman. New York: G. P. Putman's Sons. 1939. 280 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL

WE have here two books on the Old West. Mr. Lampman offers us his recollections, beginning in 1855: the story of a New York boy who went out to Minnesota and afterward ranged through every state in the Union, many parts of Europe, South and Central America, and Alaska. From his first job as bell-boy, stableboy, and general handyman in a small hotel, he progressed through the occupations of cowboy, business man, traveler, and newspaper correspondent, with a bit of soldiering very much on the side. His anecdotal memoirs contain many incidents, amusing, touching, and sometimes thrilling. The tone of the book is that of the pleasant recollections of a retired business man who intends a tribute to his wife.

Decoration by F. Miller for "The Trampling Herd"

"The Trampling Herd" is a vastly more engaging and exciting book dealing with the most romantic and at the same time epic industry in all American history: cattle. The armed man on horseback rides through its pages singing, shooting, following the trail herds up and down from Mexico to Canada. We have had many good books on the range cattle industry and the ways of the cowboy, but none, I think, which surveys the entire matter from the days when Cortez heated the first branding iron to mark his cattle with three crosses, down to the dude ranch of the present era.

Yet the book is not only eminently readable and accurate in its survey, but offers information new and absorbing even to experts in Western history. Thus, we learn the true ancestry of the Texas Longhorn, and read how a certain Texan trailed a herd of cattle to the Confederate army, and swam the Mississippi River with them to do it.

True, these novelties are only details on the huge canvas across which move the Indian, *Comanchero,* the rustler, sheepman, and nester—each giving place, not without blood and dust, to those who followed. We have accounts of various "wars" of the cattle country; and all the old favorites of the frontier appear, from Billy the Kid to Charles Goodnight, from Sitting Bull to Wyatt Earp. Paul I. Wellman is a seasoned writer, and a man born on the plains. The person who can put this book down after he begins it should not be allowed to read Western stuff at all.

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The Kaiser's Jolly Roger

THE CRUISE OF THE RAIDER "WOLF." By Roy Alexander. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1939. 270 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by EDWIN A. FALK

THIS is a timely book that tells an exciting story. One July night in 1917, when the World War was ending its third year, the captain of the new steamer *Cumberland,* one day out of Sydney, broadcast an S.O.S. stating that the vessel had struck a mine. However, as no Allied minefield was located in that vicinity and the experts persuasively argued that no German mine could have been laid there, it was established to official satisfaction that the disaster must have been caused by some internal combustion.

Exactly three weeks after the destruction of the *Cumberland,* there sailed from the same port the passenger steamer *Matunga,* bound for the captured German colony on New Guinea, but she never appeared at her destination. All efforts to trace her were fruitless. The bewildered public authorities pondered all kinds of plausible and preposterous explanations of this latest mystery of the sea and finally accepted the hypothesis, suggested by the instrumental recording of seismic disturbance in that region, that the vanished *Matunga* had been engulfed by a tidal wave.

The truth, however, was that the instantaneous surmise of the skipper of the *Cumberland* had been correct; she had struck a mine. The enemy had done the "impossible," and, for the first time in the white-man's history of Australia and New Zealand, had brought warfare to their waters. The mine that had waylaid the unsuspecting *Cumberland* had been planted by the German raider *Wolf,* which also had looted and sunk the *Matunga.*

Ingeniously concealed upon this innocent-looking raider disguised as an ordinary neutral freighter were a formidable battery of guns, torpedo-tubes, and a collapsible seaplane. Their chief function was to permit the seizure of fuel and food from vessels, such as the *Matunga,* encountered en route. The *Wolf's* primary mission, different from that of Count von Luckner's *Seeadler,* the *Moewe,* and those other few German armed merchantmen that were able to elude the British blockade, was to anchor 458 percussion mines in remote bottle-necks of British colonial traffic. Events proved that a nerve-wracking voyage of fifteen months and 64,000 miles in latitudes ranging from the Arctic through the tropics almost to the Antarctic was necessary to accomplish this task, but it was accomplished. Under the very noses of the British imperial outposts, the *Wolf's* mines were laid off Capetown, Aden, Colombo, Bombay, Singapore, and New Zealand, in addition to the field off Australia where the *Cumberland* met her fate. The vessels sunk and seriously damaged by these mines and sunk by the raider herself represented an aggregate of over 200,000 gross tons.

A vexatious problem for whose solution no preparation had been made was that of preserving the secrecy of the cruise after pirating other ships. Obviously, their passengers and crews could not be released, because even a delayed report of the mine-laying operations would have nullified their value. The only alternative to making these unfortunate people walk the plank was to keep them aboard the *Wolf.* A few women had to be provided for in this way, and men of all ages, ranks, nationalities, and races were stowed in the after-holds containing the mines that gradually were being disposed of. As additional ships were captured, this improvised jail became increasingly overcrowded until it was a veritable Black Hole of Calcutta afloat, foul with filth, vermin, and disease.

It is remarkable, therefore, that this account of the cruise of the *Wolf* by one of her long-suffering prisoners, an Australian radio operator, should be written not only with a full comprehension of the raider's point of view but also with such admiration for her exploits that the reader feels impelled to echo the exclamation: "A great ship. A great cruise. A great commander."

The author supplemented his recollections with painstaking inquiry into the facts of the cruise that fell outside of his first-hand observation. This was not as simple as one might suppose, because the secrecy surrounding the dispatch of these raiding expeditions rendered the meager paper records very difficult to piece together.

Although the introduction indicates that the tale is told for the quality of adventure and romance that it possesses in high degree, the book also is interesting and valuable, especially during the present renewal of Allied-German maritime warfare, as a serious contribution to naval history. For this reason its lack of an index is to be regretted.

Mr. Falk is the author of "Togo and the Rise of Japanese Sea Power."

Underwood & Underwood

The Hardings in Washington

The Ohio Gang

INCREDIBLE ERA. By Samuel Hopkins Adams. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1939. 457 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS is an old-timer. He exposed the patent-medicine vendors of poison in the first decade of the century. He was grouped with the intransigent reformers around *McClure's Magazine,* and later the *American Magazine,* and still later *Collier's* in the Hapgood-Sullivan regime. He has a sixth sense for graft and a life-long hate of grafters. For several years he has been assembling the material which one finds in this bitter story of the incredible era that began with the outbreak of the World War and came to a climax with the death of Warren Harding. After this, no man can write of that era who does not consult Adams's book.

Through its pages Harding walks a contradictory figure blurred by a cloud of contradictory qualities—a man with a kind heart, noble aspirations, limited intelligence, a poor education, and very little common sense. He lived on and by his emotions, by friendship, by a high Fourth-Reader patriotism, and by a desire to be loved by his followers. He was an easy victim of the grafters who came to be known historically as the "Ohio gang," and Mr. Adams's book is a story as much of the Ohio gang as it is the biography of Harding.

Mr. Adams has compiled faithfully a book of sources, assembling material with great care. However, he has edited his material with a pitchfork. It is all there—the important, the insignificant, and the mill run of Harding stories. The tale is told with meticulous detail, but it would have been a better book if its story had been a little more coherent and given a little more continuity. However, it is an earnest, honest attempt, and a readable book. It tells the story of the blackest era in American history since the days of Grant.

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Morgause and Her Family

THE WITCH IN THE WOOD. By T. H. White. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1939. 270 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

IN Mr. White's second Arthurian novel we have the land of Lothian and Orkney, that is, of King Lot—who is off to war with a grown-up Arthur; and we have *in situ* King Lot's witch-queen, Morgause, and her four boys, Gawaine, Agravaine, Gaheris, and Gareth, who are a handful —and to these in a magic boat come our friends Sir Pellinore and Sir Grummore, the very thought of whom starts us laughing. And we also have Sir Palomides, the boys' tutor, who, because he is a Saracen, talks a kind of English strangely like that of Charlie Chan. (We don't think Mr. White quite brings that off.) There is plenty of episode, of course. The killing of the unicorn is quite horrible, but sorts with the barbarity of the time—like training modern totalitarian children to exercise with bayonets. St. Torealvac is an Hibernian character of much merit: **Morgause's** false motherliness, horrible beauty-baths, and quarrels with her husband make her excruciatingly real. At the end, Morgause meets Arthur — the "upshot," as P. G. Wodehouse would say, to be Mordred.

We understand that some people are saying that the miraculous Mr. White's novel is not so good as his first; and they are right for two reasons. One, a sequel hardly, if ever, does strike the reader with the same surprise as was the result of the impact of the original—by the nature of things, how could it? Two, it is undeniable that "The Sword in the Stone" was richer in variety of episode and in brilliant shift of attack than is "The Witch in the Wood." There is nothing here like the Wart in the hawks' mews with Colonel Cully. Nothing such pure poetry as his first view of Sir Pellinore in the wood before the latter turned out to be his own ridiculous self. Nothing so wildly funny as the tilt between Sir Pellinore and Sir Grummore.

Nevertheless, "The Witch in the Wood" is a good healthy slice off the old roast. Mr. White still displays those qualities of scholarship and high fantasy which endeared him to his former readers. He is, tangentially, the most expert satirist of things British who has appeared for a long time, just as he is the greatest lover of the great qualities of his fellow-countrymen and their noble land. All he has to do for one particular reader, at least, is to keep on along the same tack. In our time we have so loved, among moderns, only Lord Dunsany. Perhaps T. H. White should be cautioned against turning them out too fast. Meanwhile, if you think we've given you much idea of the contents of the present book, you're wrong.

T. H. White

Seventh Ave. Local

PARDON ME FOR POINTING. By Arthur Kober. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1939. 251 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

ARTHUR KOBER'S wit and marvelous ear are hardly news, but the forty-two sketches here do serve to define him more clearly than before. They show his talents in greater variety, for he can do as incisive and destructive a sketch of the Broadway cowboy or the Hollywood genius as of the Bronx papa. They show also the limits he has himself definitely set for his work. This ought to be clear, of course, in the definition of caricature. If you want to know the true complexity of these city people, their total reality in terms of personal quirks and dreams and individuality, you don't want Kober at all. He is not a psychologist or a novelist or a poet, or even a thorough reporter. But if you will grant that caricature means to suggest by exaggeration, and to give an illusion of wholeness while yet offering only a little of the external data—then you will see that Kober is a first-rate literary caricaturist, as effective with the bold, slashing line as anybody writing that sort of thing. This is an album of bold, swift, distorted pictures, based upon characteristic gestures, racial traits, clichés of speech, episodes blacked out for effectiveness. But as you turn the pages and see these chorines, directors, yes-men, writers, actors, or just clucks, they add up to something: an astringent criticism of a sham world. We do not mean to be weighing down Mr. Kober's book with a message, but the fact remains that it is not only a funny book.

Success Story

SAM. By John Selby. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1939. 346 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

MR. SELBY'S Sam is a twentieth-century buccaneer who makes good clean fun of scuttling ships and inviting his rivals to walk the plank. He has his own rudimentary ideas of sportmanship but is troubled by no faint glimmering of an ethical concept. So, as he roars and bullies, curses and elbows his way to enormous success, he is able still to think of himself as a reasonably good fellow.

At the moment when Sam becomes belligerently on the make, he happens to start drinking with a newspaper man in the town of Centropolis. His pockets are full of the winnings of an all-night poker session; he needs to make an investment and start a career. He acts on a drunken impulse to buy a failing daily, and out of that beginning improvises a campaign in civic leadership as ruthless, as cynical, and as engrossing as any that has ever been recorded.

John Selby has created a wonderfully and horribly detailed portrait of Sam. One believes in the relentless honesty of the study, senses the strange, deflected energy of the character, is repelled by his gross appetites and his intellectual perversities. And still one thing keeps Sam from being as impressive as he might be: he never grows or changes. On the final page he is no better and no worse than he had been on the first.

A sense of movement might have been given to the book if some effort had been made to show Sam demoralizing the life of those about him. But Sam is surrounded by puppets. Most of them are as cynical as he and as venal. Even Sam's beautiful wife and her courtly lover never catch up one's imaginative loyalty. In their vague way, they seem too well protected against Sam. They even exploit him a little. The identification with Sam is so close that the style, too, becomes his own. The tone is lusty, profane, colloquial. With Sam's own gusto the book pounds on to the end, always readable, never subtle. John Selby is a sort of latter-day Sinclair Lewis. There is much of Babbitt in Sam and there is even something of the pattern of "Dodsworth" in the novel's design. That may be why the judges, remembering that Mr. Lewis is a Nobel Prize winner, have chosen the work of his intellectual successor to represent America in the 1939 All-Nations Prize Novel Competition.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Ham on Rye

FLETCHER PRATT'S article two weeks ago pointed out the fallacies of the novelists who have prophesied the nature of this war. There is also a growing body of literature—for want of a better word—not specifically concerned with the war, but intimately connected with it in the expression of collective insecurity. These novels, several of which have appeared recently, have in common a technical dexterity, a slick surface, and an obvious air of having been written for the market. There is no harm in writing for the market, but we question the effectiveness—if only that—of using serious events, tragic in their implications to millions of people, as window-dressing for essentially frivolous fiction.

It is not a simple question as it applies to such novels as, for instance, Somerset Maugham's "Christmas Holiday" and Geoffrey Household's "Rogue Male," because it is hard to know just how seriously the authors intended to be taken. Competent reviewers are in wide disagreement as to the merits of Mr. Maugham's new novel: to some it seems a slick reconstruction of stock situations with an intellectual veneer, to others it seems a brilliant analysis of the forces of evil disrupting the modern world. Most readers would probably agree, moreover, even those who admire "Christmas Holiday," that it does not make the most of its material. The essential relationship of "Christmas Holiday" to the contemporary complex is in its portrait of the young man undergoing a self-imposed Spartan discipline by way of training himself to be the head of the coming British Gestapo (the story of the Russian girl whose husband has been transported for murder has an indirect relationship to the state of the world, but is principally a story for its own sake, without special contemporary reference). The young man, Simon, is plausible, interesting, convincing on a superficial level; but he is explained only from the outside, his long speeches convey his ambitions but not his motives. He is presented as a case history in the psychopathology of the will to power, and he does not come off as such, because Mr. Maugham has not taken the trouble to give the character all he's got.

"Rogue Male" is excellent of its kind—the story of a man who took a pot shot at a dictator, escaped under almost incredible circumstances, and hid out from the (presumably Nazi) avengers until they tracked him down—but it raises the same question. It is about something that is too big for its method. It reduces the self-preservation of the human race to terms of big-game hunting, and for this reason it makes the reader feel uncomfortable in the midst of a genuine excitement induced by expert narration.

Two other novels published within the last month are in the same category. Graham Greene's "Confidential Agent" would be a first-rate spy story, but that it too intimately and painfully suggests the most horrible realities of the Spanish Civil War. The story of a man whose wife was executed by a rebel firing squad is not, however ingenious in plotting, appropriate material for a streamlined Oppenheim; or so we submit. Paul Gallico's new novel, "The Adventures of Hiram Holliday," gives us an American newspaper man who rescues a damsel in distress—but rescues her from the Nazi kidnapping machine, which works much too realistically to mix with the otherwise fantastic, lighthearted, and distinctly agreeable adventure.

So many books published in so short a time indicate that the events leading up to the present war have been widely seized upon to give timeliness and an appearance of reality to what is essentially a standard brand of escape fiction. The trouble with it is that the effect on the reader is just the reverse of that which escape fiction tries to produce. Or are we alone in this feeling?

The Loon Cried Out

Sept. 4, 1939

BY ELIZABETH K. PHELPS STOKES

"HERE is the scientist from England,"
Well, shall we sit on these logs and listen?
Back of this Adirondack island at dusk,
With a fearless splash,
A doe bathes . . . . . .
No, this man cannot be still
For the thumping in his head,
A poor day for this visiting research worker!

Strangely silent as burdened with unutterable jest,
For distraction we paddled up the lake,
Following some foolish ducks abreast,
"It's a great laboratory here," he said,
His mind could not rest,
In the depths of his voice despair was wild,
"No idea your country was like this,
I am called,
I sail next week,
I leave Maida and the child."

He is young; I am old,
Thank God, he knows only what he has been told,
I know how far away that other war seemed and how bold
We felt,
Now I know how near this invader is unless
Repelled;
Within this hour waves of the lake are regimented,
Spruce and mountains are marching in,
Sparks from our fire shoot through the air,
Mist from the orchid marsh our smoke screen . . .
We were neither wholly here nor there
When suddenly another visitor took part,
A loon in crescendo shrieked and cried,
Could it be that he mocked,
"What's the use, the use, the use?
Show me a neutral heart"?

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Letters to the Editor: *The War and the Prophets*

Bombardment of Cities

SIR:—The *SRL* has confounded my estimate of it. Since September 1 it has become more than a pleasant way of keeping posted on matters literary; it has become necessary to my thinking. Congratulations and thanks.

Provocative and well-documented as the articles have been, it wasn't until today that I was moved to animated argument with my wallpaper. How can Fletcher Pratt write "The War and the Prophets" without mentioning the word "Warsaw"? He did, you know. After criticizing authors for their partiality to descriptions of aerial bombardment of cities, he wrote "the effects of violent air raiding appealing to many authors as the surest way of breaking down normal life." Is there anything but collaboration of this belief in the insanity and terror that swept Poland, or the cholera and typhus raging now?

By cleverly denouncing authors of war-prophecy books, Mr. Pratt leans over backwards. These books were not scientific treatises — they were novels. Nor has their message been refuted. "This fear of extinction would seem to lie at the root of practically all the prophetic literature of the war that was to be tomorrow's and is now today's." Even when Mr. Pratt says, "See, this war isn't so bad as the novelists said," he is dealing with technicalities and is overlooking the horrors of war that are fundamental.

KAY DEALY.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. Pratt Replies

SIR:—Miss Dealy's criticism seems to separate itself into two parts—the question of Warsaw and the question of war.

Now I deliberately avoided mentioning Warsaw for two reasons. The first is that we have, as yet, no really reliable information as to what happened in Warsaw; all the news has come through censored sources, that is, it is propaganda. The curious fact about Warsaw is that it was to the interest of the propagandists on both sides to make the bombardment look as deadly as possible—the Poles, to arouse sympathy, the Germans, to warn the rest of Poland and the Allies as well not to monkey with the buzzsaw of their military machine.

The second reason for the omission of Warsaw is that what information we do have about it speaks of the town as being under heavy artillery as well as aerial bombardment. We need go no farther than Vicksburg, Miss., to discover that artillery can make a mess of a city of wooden frame houses; but I think it has not yet been demonstrated that the unaided airplane can do so.

"Don't render it, Miss Auchincloss, just read it."

As to the question of the war in general, the fault seems to be mine for not sufficiently emphasizing the fact (as I see it) that the war of 1914 was the exception, and the current war is a return to the norm of wars throughout the centuries. The error of the fictional prophets has lain in adopting the war of 1914 as a new norm.

FLETCHER PRATT.

New York City.

Thoreau and the Civil War

SIR:—Mr. Fletcher Pratt, in his interesting "The War and the Prophets," is quite right in saying that in 1863 Thoreau could turn his back on the Civil War, since in 1863 H.D.T. was dead and buried! He is wrong, however, in implying that Thoreau had no concern in the war. After Sumter, and when Lincoln had taken his stand, his interest, in spite of his failing health, was deep and constant. Not even Bull Run detracted from his optimistic faith that at last the nation was about to make the right prevail. There was some moral naiveté in his view of the conflict, but not an ounce of indifference.

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.

New York City.

From a Charter Subscriber

SIR:—Permit me to congratulate you on the issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature* of October 14: "Required Reading," by Elmer Davis is good and "Adventurous Writing" by Anne Morrow Lindbergh, a sublime criticism of a grand book. Being one of the first subscribers to your magazine, I watch its development with devoted interest.

MARY SUYDAM.

Perrysburg, Ohio.

Biography of Dr. Harvey Cushing

SIR:—Mrs. Harvey Cushing has requested me to prepare a biography of her husband, the celebrated surgeon, and I should be most grateful to anyone who wishes to make letters, anecdotes, or other memorabilia available.

Copies of all letters, no matter how brief, are desired, and if dates are omitted it is hoped that, when possible, these may be supplied (*e.g.*, from the postmark). If original letters or other documents are submitted, they will be copied and returned promptly.

A new Medical Library building is being erected at the Yale University School of Medicine to receive Dr. Cushing's library and collections, including his letters, diaries, and manuscripts. Any of his friends who wish, now or later, to present correspondence, photographs, or other memorabilia for permanent preservation among the Cushing papers will receive the appreciative thanks of the University.

JOHN F. FULTON, M.D.

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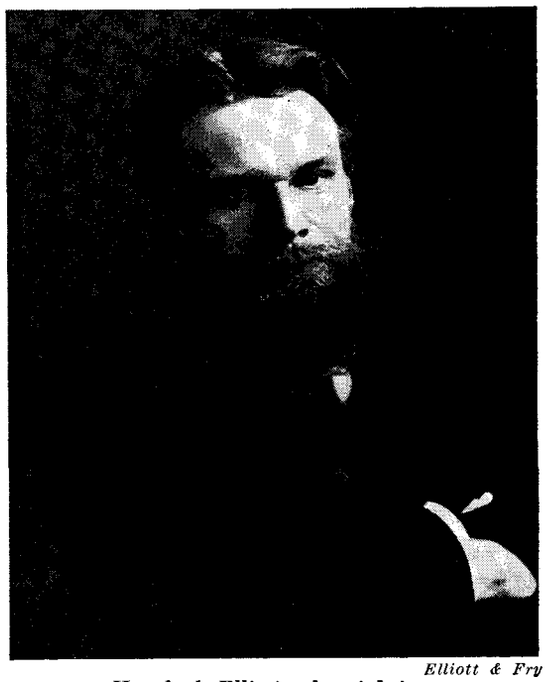
Widower's House

BY

BERNARD DEVOTO



Elliott & Fry

Havelock Ellis in the eighties

IT was natural to expect that Havelock Ellis's autobiography* would be so frank, so searching, and so profound that it might be compared with the masterpieces of St. Augustine, Casanova, and Rousseau which, he says on page *vii,* he had it within him to surpass. The man whom H. L. Mencken called the most civilized Englishman of his time, author of one of the most fruitful scientific works of the last half-century, an intelligence which harmonized the highest qualities of both the scientist and the artist, a distinguished writer—surely such a man, when he should undertake to appraise his experience, would write a masterpiece. Probably it would tell the story of his research, as fascinating and turbulent as any in the history of science. Probably, since Ellis had written "The New Spirit" and "Impressions and Comments," it would be a measured judgment of his era. Probably, since he was intimate with many of the most distinguished people of the time, it would include a gallery of important portraits. And certainly as the life-story of one who "had helped to make the world in the only way that it can be made, the interior way, by liberating the human spirit," it would describe the process of that liberation.

Well, Ellis set out to write a "Pilgrim's Progress of the soul," spent thirty years shaping it to his desire, and, when he finished, had indeed written a masterpiece. But it is in no particular the kind of autobiography one expected. All that he says about his era is that he was a child of it. James Hinton, Edward Carpenter, and Arthur Symons appear in person occasionally, but few of his other associates are named and none are characterized; Ellis seems to have lacked not only the ability to write about friendship but even a sense of its importance. More surprising still, there is little about his life work, "Studies in the Psychology of Sex," apart from repeated assertions of his dedication to it. He repeats the story which he had already told, in the final edition, of the bizarre events that attended the English publication of the first volume, but he says nothing about the work itself, nothing about its pioneering in forbidden fields, the passions it aroused, or the vast influence it has had. Of the labor or warfare it involved there is not a single word.

It is not that kind of autobiography. It begins with a laborious study of Ellis's ancestry, as dull as anything you will find in a year's reading. It goes on with a duller and more absurdly solemn narrative of his boyhood and youth. But then it becomes the book which the whole burden of his experience determined it must be, the story of his marriage. And from then on it is a tragic love story—and it is woven of ironies so terrible and so poignant that they carry the reader beyond criticism, beyond judgment, into the region of humble tears which only great books ever touch. But there are times when it seems in danger of turning into a joke book.

That story and those ironies leave the reader, I repeat, in a mood of grave humility. For Ellis was a great man and did a great work—and his confessions end by making more obscure, more unintelligible, than they were before the ways of human greatness in this world. For the man who helped to liberate the human spirit did not understand himself. The man who spent a lifetime studying women was blind and stupid about the woman he married, who is the obsession of this book. The man who devoted his life to studying sex and fighting to dispel the pruderies with which Christian and Victorian ethics had surrounded it, depreciated sex in his own thinking and believed that it had not too much to do with passion and little to do with love. The first scientist of sex was not only undersexed but was, the conclusion is inescapable, afraid of experiencing sex.

Those are formidable paradoxes in this bewildering book. But there are others, and the one that goes hand in hand with you from the first page hinges on Ellis's complete lack of humor. The faculty was not even vestigial in him, it simply did not exist, and in the first third of the book, before the tragedy of his marriage is apparent, his most heartfelt solemnities reduce the reader to uproarious laughter. It is hard to remember that this is a great man writing when he judicially identifies himself with the exact geographical center of the British genius. It is almost impossible when he gravely (and repeatedly) tells us that women have called him, the least faunlike and least satyr-like of men, a faun and a satyr, that he is mischievous and resembles Tolstoy and embodies the Spirit of Man, that his cast-off shirts have a distinct odor of cedar. One howls with laughter—for a while. Then one realizes that this tone-deafness is only one expression of a tragic defect: that this student of human behavior had little understanding of and no skill in personal relations, and that the algebraic cast of mind which it signifies explains why his marriage failed, why there is only talk about friendship in his book and no friendship, and why his great work on the anthropology of sex was never in the least what he called it, a psychology of sex. His humorlessness was the mark of a man who devoted himself to studying human emotions but was deficient in them, misunderstood them, and was bewildered by their failure to equate with rationality. It is the key to Ellis's life and to his work as well.

He was a romantic rationalist. He was like a character in Bernard Shaw's novels and in the half-dozen of his plays which resemble them—where

*MY LIFE. By Havelock Ellis. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1939. 647 pp., with index. $3.75.

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people reason out the world by syllogism and arrive at a fantastic parody of experience. He was a late nineteenth-century man of good will and good works, a member of the Fellowship of the New Life from which the Fabian Society stemmed, an idealogue on a heroic scale, a yearner and a throbber in terms of the highest intelligence. And when you think of the Fabians you suddenly realize that you understand him—and that he enables you to understand the Fabians better than before. The book reinforces a suspicion long vaguely felt, that there would be profit in studying this whole area of British thought and politics, Shaw's plays, the Webbs' economics, as a phenomenon of sexlessness. Is not the central energy of the whole movement a wish that people would stop having feelings? When the Webbs draw up a constitution of Great Britain or approve the freedom accorded thought and speech in Soviet Russia, when Shaw makes the world happier by socializing parenthood, we are on all fours with Olive Schreiner's incredible advice to Ellis that he go abroad so that his wife may be undisturbed at the crisis of the quarter-century of torture which his rationality has inflicted on her. It is clear which feeling mankind would be best advised to give up first.

The only psychologist directly referred to in the book is Adler, who, remember, developed the theory of organ inferiority. The man with defective eyes becomes a painter, the man with weak legs becomes a sprinter. Well, the man who could not understand his own motives or those of the woman who was the center of his life became, so he thought, a psychologist, and the man of weak sexual potency became the first scientist of sex. He does not mention the Freudian theories by name but is at pains to deny that they are applicable to his childhood and youth. There was, he says, little or nothing in his early experience that implied sexual curiosity or sexual feeling—and he records innumerable data which Freudians will have a happy time exploring. That repression is not hard to understand, but it is astonishing that the author of "Erotic Symbolism" was never aware of what his own terminology calls fetichism in his love for his mother and his wife. He extensively discusses the weakness of his sexual impulses—but then he goes on to describe himself as a great lover, wholly failing to perceive that his love was fixed at a juvenile, even infantile, level. There is throughout an amazing naiveté and an amazing blindness in his introspection, and when he comes to the certainly psychopathic elements in his marriage his ideas are crude and desperately unrealistic. This is not the place for an extended inquiry, but there must be some characterization of the partners in the marriage which he rightly regarded as the center and significance of his life. In no other way can the love story be understood —and, make no mistake, it is a great love story greatly felt and greatly revealed.

It was a marriage of true minds, which is at once the core and the tragedy of it, and a true marriage as well, fused in an agony of frustration that made all the rest of their experience unimportant. When he met Edith Lees, Ellis had begun his long study of sexual behavior—and his sexual development had been permanently arrested at a narcistic level. He tells us that throughout his life he was intoxicated with love, but of sexual experience he had had, when he married, nothing that went beyond exhibitionism. His youth had been dominated by his mother-phantasies; he had had a number of fervent but inactive love affairs, of which the most notable was the grotesque one with Olive Schreiner. (Let's be specific: Olive appears never to have been his mistress in the complete physical sense, he and his wife found marital relations distressing and gave them up after a few years, it is clear that sexual intercourse played only a small and dubious part in his ecstatic relations with other women.) He had strong sexual exaltations but they rose for the most part out of substitute gratifications and they led him through wholly intellectual excitements into a fleshless mysticism which he identified as the ultimate joy of love.

Ellis in his studio, 1897.

All this clears up two ambiguities in the "Studies." The thing you encounter least often in those seven volumes, whether in the endless data Ellis assembled or in the case histories he used for illustration, is the simple lust of the flesh, the immediate and unmodified desire of man for woman, the normal wish for pleasure as an end in itself, the normal impulse toward procreation. And, magnificent as the seven volumes are in their encyclopedic exposition of the facts of sex, they usually lapse into mysticism when they try to fit a hypothesis to the facts. The autobiography shows that there is little desire in them because Ellis felt little, and the psychological theorizing is mystical because in his heart the champion of the flesh has repudiated the flesh.

Edith Lees was a writer and lecturer, a social worker, an ardent communicant in the Fellowship of the New Life, an almost perfect exemplar of the theories which the advanced intelligence of England was shaping toward the end of the century, a New Woman out of Ibsen, Grant Allen, and Bernard Shaw. (Or out of Shaw alone. You meet her many times in the beskirted but epicene figures who debate their way through "The Doctor's Dilemma," "Getting Married," "Misalliance," "Fanny's First Play," "The Philanderer," "Widowers' Houses.") Her childhood had been maimed by the hatred of a tyrannical father and, classically, by the persecutions of a stepmother. Ellis comes closer to the psychology of sex than anywhere else in the book when he says that her father's antagonism had given her an inferiority complex, but he never takes the further step which would have enabled him to understand her. Pathologically independent, fiercely antagonistic to all male images and manifestations, she had inevitably formed herself in the image of her father and was, though as yet only latently, a homosexual. The stresses thus set up had made her also a hysteric and a hypochondriac.

Psychologically, each of these idealogues found in the other exactly what he needed. Ellis could love only a woman who would preserve inviolate the infantile narcism which protected him from his own dread of adult sex. Edith, who was emotionally somewhat more mature, needed a man sufficiently male to defend her against her homosexual impulses but insufficiently adult to activate the ambivalent dread of masculinity that had been implanted in her.

So, after acting out three-quarters

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of a Shaw play in high-minded debates, whether they should establish an open and free union, whether it was better to cohabit privately, whether they should have children, whether the State had any proper interest in a contract which excluded children—they were married. And, being liberated intelligences out of a Fabian tract, they drew up specifications for the marriage. They would maintain separate establishments. Each would shoulder his own expenses. The individual must be protected in his individuality, so they would separate for long periods, in fact they would meet only when mutually inclined. They would put jealousy behind them, as a barbarous and unemancipated emotion. Each would be free to cultivate his own interests, his own friendships, his own loves, and the other would cooperate as sympathetically as a Shaw hero. They would master life, marriage, and the problems of the individual with a set of by-laws as enlightened as the modern intelligence could frame.

Only the individual would not emancipate, the emotions would not conform, and forces which neither the Fabian Society nor the first scientist of sex ever took into account at once linked these two in a bondage so powerful, so terrible, and so beautiful that its detailed exposure makes this book a great document in human love. They were caught fast in a mutual need which time never lessened but only increased, which made everything else insignificant for both and inhibited Ellis from thinking about anything else when he came to appraise his life. They could meet, of course, only on an infantile level, only as children. On page after page of the letters which make up a large part of the book, each repeatedly calls the other "baby." Each is forever repeating his desire to be the other's child. Their love-making is the play of children, their tenderness is the mutual gratitude of children for help in remaining Peter Pan, the highest maturity that either could attain (Edith shows it oftener than Ellis) is the phantasy that he is the other's mother. Each was the other's ally against the terrifying necesssity of growing up in a world of adults, and neither could tolerate sex except as it evaded its own necessities and provided a childish escape from the obligations of adult heterosexuality. Love was a license to be neuter, a way of staying safely sterile. There are words for it in "Studies in the Psychology of Sex." There are more accurate words for it in Freud.

Secure in his younger infantilism, Ellis never thought the sexual act very important. It disgusted Edith and presently she suggested that they give it up but, significantly, when she later suggested resuming it he refused. It appears to have played some part in his subsequent affairs with other women but that part is ambiguous and must have been exceedingly small—and could probably be identified somewhere in the "Studies." Edith, however, had a stronger drive toward maturity than he—and he failed her. Her homosexuality became overt and she had a series of affairs with women. Meanwhile the pretty diagrams they had drawn up for marriage were blown to tatters by the gales of experience. Her increasing, neurotic invalidism prevented her from bearing her share of the family expenses, and her will to be an independent spirit clashed agonizingly with her desperate need to be protected as a woman. The rational separations became torments of jealousy and unsatisfied, childish need for each other. Always an infant, Ellis was able to achieve an equanimity toward Edith's infidelities with women which must have seemed admirably advanced to the Fabians, but is psychologically further evidence of the sources from which his peace was derived. (And how did the student of perversion miss the ambiguity of identifying himself with his wife's lovers?) But Edith, always the more adult, though she struggled to maintain the proper Fabian complaisance toward his mild, conversational, and adolescent infidelities, suffered such a hell of jealousy, self-doubt, and displaced hatred as has seldom got itself into print. (And how did the student of sadistic violence miss recognizing hostility as one pole of their love?)

That this relationship was a great love affair, that it sustained them through the ghastly suffering it created, that it was so rich as to make all the rest of their lives poor, is evidenced on every page of the book, in words that transmit unmodified the despairing but bitterly sincere cry of the heart. It was a great love affair—but what a composite of need misunderstood, desire unsatisfied, and hate unrecognized it was! They were welded in a desperation which was a flight from maturity when they were together and became a pathological anxiety bordering on panic the moment they were separated. They scourged each other with an endless questioning and protestation, an endless accusation, an endless reproach for insufficiency of love, an endless demand for love, an endless assertion of love, of protection, of suspicion, of understanding, of mystical fulfillment. They loved as children, even as frustrated and terrified children, but the childish love burned to incandescence. Quite simply, it was the meaning of life to Havelock Ellis, and the passages in which he reflects on it (so uncomprehendingly) have a nobility which cannot be impugned.

And yet! Edith emerges from these pages a figure of genuine tragedy, a woman who had elements of greatness in her and was crucified by life. Ellis, a much greater intelligence, a man who accomplished great things, is, however, wrapped in an ineffable irony. The book, in fact, is surcharged with ironies so acid that they seem cosmic. The rationalist who supposed at the climax of tragedy that he has transmuted his irrationality to reason, the self-styled great lover who reduces sex to conversation and discovers that the transcendence of passion occurs as the absence of sex, the encyclopedist of sex who fears sex and fails to perceive its manifestations in himself—what comic dramatist could have created such a figure? He will go down in intellectual history as a man who fought a great battle victoriously and established a science which has the greatest possible import for mankind. But elsewhere in history he will have a different shape. He will be seen as inconceivably inept in the relationship which meant everything to him. A figure talking, talking, talking, trying to reduce the most powerful energies of life to the service of an empty and impotent sweetness of the mind, blackly misunderstanding the woman who was the center of his existence, and not only misunderstanding her but, with the unaware stupidity of a Shavian idealogue, destroying her. Frustration unperceived, tragedy diminished to simple self-love, a magnificent intelligence altogether confounded by its crucial experience—that is the man whom this book reveals, and reveals in a serene delusion that it is portraying a master of life. A man, in one illustration, who, when his wife was half the world away, could write to her, at the very moment when her health and sanity were breaking under the long accumulation of his failure as a lover and husband, that he was contracting a new, beautiful, and ever so Fabian relationship with another woman—who, after twenty years of living with her, could write such news in the placid expectation that she would be as delighted as any Shaw preface said she ought to be, and who spends many pages wondering just why and wherein he seems somehow, though with the purest intentions, to have been wrong.

Do not miss this book. It is instinct with the insoluble mysteries of men and women. It is a deep well from which everyone will bring up what he can, but something surely, that bears on the insoluble mysteries of human greatness. And it makes clear why the finest part of Ellis's "Studies" is not the volume called "Sex in Relation to Society," as Ellis thought, but instead the volume called "Love and Pain."

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The Press on the Warpath

NEWSPAPER CRUSADERS: A Neglected Story. By Silas Bent. New York: Whittlesey House. 1939. 313 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by CHARLES MCD. PUCKETTE

MR. BENT for some years has been a diligent critic of the newspaper press. Most impartial observers will agree with only one half of the jacket's description of him as a "severe and fair-minded" one. Perhaps Mr. Bent may not subscribe to the implication, from the same source, that this volume makes some amends by telling the other side of the newspaper's character. However that may be, the reader interested in journalistic history will find Mr. Bent's book a fairly comprehensive listing of the major newspaper crusades in many fields. The author had the choice of mentioning many incidents, or of telling more adequately the story of a smaller number of outstanding ones. He took the first course, which probably was the better choice, but the choppy effect is sometimes disappointing. The student of the subject, if interested in a particular crusade, doubtless always finds it necessary to go to original sources.

Not all newspaper men are of the same opinion on the value of crusades. Some of the most respected names in daily journalism, men having a high sense of the public responsibility of the press, are not identified with crusades. Other newspapers—by far the majority of the better known ones—have used this weapon for arousing public opinion with success and to their glory. The New York *World* in its best days was the outstanding example in the crusading field, with Nelson's *Kansas City Star* and Pulitzer's *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* high in the honor roll. It is equally true that not all crusades are in the public welfare; some of the loudest have been blatherskitism for box-office purposes masquerading under the guise of patriotism.

But on the whole crusades (generally, of course, on local matters) have been a great service on the part of the press, as Mr. Bent remarks, compelling action to end corruption, cruelty, dishonesty, and inefficiency, or to promote public safety, welfare, and health. They can reasonably be looked upon as a real contribution of the newspaper to the democratic process. Mr. Bent covers a good deal of ground, but the plan of his book is not altogether successful; the chapters on colonial and early crusades, inserted between discussions of modern incidents, are rather humdrum and neither convincing nor interesting. Mr. Bent's list of crusades is not in all respects complete; the *New York Evening Post's* fight to reform New Jersey's prison system, which won a Pulitzer prize, is not mentioned. Just as important as the *World's* fight on the Treasury's gold policy was the crusade of education of Alexander Dana Noyes, in the *Evening Post,* on sound money, which did so much to save the country from Bryanism.

Mr. Bent displays in several places his distrust of newspapers as being "under the coercion of capitalist economy" and the pressure of advertisers. He also exhibits some naive ignorance. In harping upon that current favorite theme of the liberals, the alleged treason of the Scripps-Howard chain to its early ideals, he refers to the "profits" from the sale of millions of extras on the false armistice report. The implication is unjustified, and the mention of profits will surprise the counting room. His comment upon the reported financial returns of certain newspapers in New York is singularly uninformed. He is on sounder ground in his criticisms of newspaper organizations for the character of their opposition to such measures as the child labor amendment and an effective pure food and drugs act.

A Converted Yankee

A SEA ISLAND LADY. By Francis Griswold. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1939. 964 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

WHEN Emily Moffett first came to the sea-islands of Carolina, in the sunset of the Confederacy, it was as a Yankee and a stranger. It would be too pat to retitle Mr. Griswold's book, "Mrs. Moffett's Conversion from Loyalty to Secession," for, by the time that the spell upon Emily, the War was over, and reconstruction already in the land. But, in a sense, that is the theme of his story—a New England girl, drawn by the chance of a bad marriage and an abortive, flaring love-affair into the ruined web of the post-War Southern system and giving her women's shrewdness and her Yankee best to building up a new society on the wreck of the old. And, in his first four-hundred-odd pages, Mr. Griswold has told an admirable and moving story. The War part is very well done, and so is Emily's first contact with the sea-islands and the real South. Her sinister, praying carpet-bagger of a first husband, Aaron Moffett, is shrewdly sketched, and so is Stephen Fenwick, the dashing Southern gallant, never quite healed from the War. The confused ruin of the first years of reconstruction is well painted, and the desperate attempt of people who had seen their world fall to pieces around them to rebuild something or anything from the bare ground.

Francis Griswold

So far, so good. But, after Emily has married her Stephen and started trying to rebuild the plantation, the book begins to lag and grow diffuse. Mr. Griswold has tried to cover so much time and so many events that we start to lose Emily herself in a blur of dates and happenings. There's the hurricane and the Spanish-American War, the fire of 1907, two pages on the installation of the first party-line telephone at Beaufort, the World War and various reactions to it, the later years. And the novel, as a novel, suffers. There are excellent sections in the latter part of the book — John Clark's arrival at Marshlands is one of them. But the central line fades out and we begin to realize that we are being shown a typical-picture-of-what-happened-to-a-South-Carolina-plantation-and-its-people, rather than reading a novel in its own right.

That is not to say that "A Sea Island Lady" is not a cut above most of the historical novels of the fall. It is. It is written by a man who can write, and write with beauty and fidelity of a region he knows and must love from the way in which he writes about it. It is in his pages, the haunting, fertile charm that has spun its web over visitor and resident since the first settlers came. And, in his less central characters, in Rusty Stewart and Joe Bramwell and the maidenly Eugenia, Mr. Griswold is highly successful. If the second part were as close-knit and as dramatic as the first part, he would have given us a sizeable novel indeed. But in spite of its arid stretches, "A Sea Island Lady" is well worth reading, both for its own sake and for what it tells about a particular part of America.

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Another Yesterday

THE DAY BEFORE. By H. M. Tomlinson. New York: G. P. Putman's Sons. 1939. 297 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN SCOTT MABON

THE similarity of Mr. Tomlinson's new novel to "All Our Yesterdays" is not confined to the title. Like that earlier work, "The Day Before" is the chronicle of an era, indeed, of roughly the same era as that with which Mr. Tomlinson has already dealt. The present novel covers the period extending from the turn of the century to 1914, and ends with the seemingly inevitable reference to that unheard-of place, Sarajevo. Moreover, just as the central figure of "All Our Yesterdays" was a journalist, so Clem Venner in "The Day Before" is a journalist; and his chief function is the same as his predecessor's: to serve as a springboard for the author's fancy.

The criticism that the "characters" in Mr. Tomlinson's novels are not characters at all but simply disembodied voices has been made too often to need repeating, even though it is probably truer of the present work than ever before. And that defect alone would not necessarily be a grave matter if the device were frankly acknowledged as such. But Mr. Tomlinson's use of characters is not a help but a hindrance. They (and the reader) are at the mercy of a wayward plottiness that is obstructive and confusing. Situations are introduced, a set of circumstances is established, the stage is tantalizingly set for the most dramatic developments; the entire structure is then breezily bashed in and forgotten and the quasi narrative is swirled along on a stream of prose that knows no direction save that of unpredictable caprice. Strange that a writer with so distinguished a sense of the form of a sentence and the continuity of a paragraph should be so lacking in a rudimentary sense of narrative form and continuity; should, indeed, wilfully misuse narrative elements merely to the bemuddlement of the reader and to the detriment of what he really has to say.

It is a pity. For Mr. Tomlinson has something to say. If, in his retrospective absorption with a period in the past that may seem to us more remote and less urgently related to our present preoccupations than it was a dozen years ago when he published "All Our Yesterdays," he is sometimes trite, he yet remains the master of a style that can clothe even the commonplace in shining verbal raiment and that can, at times, catch a fancy, create a mood, or forge a description of memorable beauty. Out of a brief glimpse into a London tenement at the time of a dock strike he fashions a masterpiece of vivid and eloquent restraint. The icy precision of his account of the fateful sinking of the *Titanic* stamps the tragedy indelibly in the mind.

Despite its shortcomings, here is a book for all those who cherish the great heritage of English prose and delight in its increase.

Ned and the Devil

LIVE AND KICKING NED. By John Masefield. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1939. 477 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

LAST year there appeared a novel by Mr. Masefield called "Dead Ned," which seemed to be one half of an excellent adventure story. It was told in the first person by a young eighteenth-century doctor, who was falsely accused of murdering a benefactor, convicted, *and hanged*—but then resuscitated, and smuggled out of England aboard a slaver, obviously bound for trouble. Here the book ended, with the hero not safe, the real murderer not disclosed, and nothing further said about that mysterious tribe of white savages whom one of the characters had once encountered in Africa and had described for us at great length. Of course, a sequel was to be expected; but in these post- "Anthony Adverse" days there is little excuse for making us buy our adventures on the installment plan. So it is pleasant to be able to say that Mr. Masefield has repented of his original plan of issuing the book as a trilogy, and has combined the second and third parts, "Live Ned" and "Kicking Ned," in the present volume.

The three parts, taken together, make up a first-rate adventure story. In much of this Masefield is at his best; the early scene when the drunken captain, believing that he is haunted by the ghost of a man he has killed, forces his black mistress to work voodoo and raise the Devil to banish the ghost, is one of the finest pieces of foreboding you will find anywhere. All the scenes on shipboard, like all of "Dead Ned," combine a brooding premonition with a vividness and conviction that recall Defoe. But later we leave the world of Defoe for that of Rider Haggard. And after the hero returns to England, still a convicted murderer and in danger of his life, the earlier mood of perilous reality is never quite recaptured. Still, the world of Rider Haggard is one of the best of all possible worlds, and if this book does not altogether fulfill the romantic promise of "Dead Ned," it remains entertainment of the finest.

Recommended Reading

(This column is prepared by the editors of The Saturday Review *by way of registering continued interest in books previously reviewed in these pages. It will include only current books, but none published less than a month ago.)*

SHAKESPEARE. *By Mark Van Doren.* Unconventional criticism, from a poet's point of view, of the plays and poems of Shakespeare, not as documents in literary history but as works of art. (*Reviewed October* 7.)

MEN UNDER THE SEA. *By Edward Ellsberg.* Commander Ellsberg's story of salvage and rescue on the ocean floor has a special timeliness in view of the importance of the submarine today. (*Reviewed October* 7.)

THE FINE ART OF PROPAGANDA: A STUDY OF FATHER COUGHLIN'S SPEECHES (prepared by the Institute of Propaganda Analysis). *Edited by Alfred McClung Lee and Elizabeth Briant Lee.* An exposure of domestic propaganda, recommended to those who think it all comes from Europe. (*Reviewed October* 7.)

THE HERITAGE OF AMERICA. *Edited by Henry Steele Commager and Allan Nevins.* American history as it was made, in personal narratives and first-hand accounts of observers and participants. (*Reviewed September* 30.)

AFRICAN MAJESTY. *By F. Clement C. Egerton.* The human side of a village in the Cameroons, revealed with sympathy and humor. King N'jiké of Bangangté is worth knowing. (*Reviewed August* 5.)

FAMILY ALBUM. *By Humphrey Pakington.* Unpretentious but not to be overlooked, this humorous family history quietly evokes the enduring quality of English life, which can be at its best when it is at its funniest. (*Reviewed August* 19.)

CHILDREN OF GOD. *By Vardis Fisher.* A stirring, panoramic novel of the Mormons, sound as history and convincing as fiction. (*Reviewed August* 26.)

THE REVOLUTION OF NIHILISM. *By Hermann Rauschning.* A "warning to the west," plotting the course of Nazi dynamics from the Reichstag fire to the "world revolution." (*Reviewed September* 9.)

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"Good talk is rare, and getting rarer. Here is a book of it, with valuable subject-matter and no let-down from beginning to end."

—Henry Seidel Canby, Saturday Review

Do you know . . . ?

. . . . that Mussolini wanted Mr. Untermeyer to regard him not as a politician but as a violinist?

. . . . about the fervent admirer who, unable to possess D. H. Lawrence during his lifetime, tried to steal his ashes—and how she was forever thwarted?

. . . . why Amy Lowell's guests had to take their after-dinner coffee with bath-towels draped across their knees?

. . . . that Louis Untermeyer "discovered" Nathalia Crane as a poet in a five-and-ten-cent store?

. . . why Vachel Lindsay determined to make Springfield, Illinois, the cultural center of America after seeing Rimsky-Korsakow's "Coq D'Or"?

. . . . that H. L. Mencken once tried to cure Mr. Untermeyer's cold by sending him a stolen Bible inscribed "with the compliments of the Author"?

. . . . that Robert Frost once tramped through the Carolinas looking for work and that he and Louis Untermeyer *almost* established Utopia in the South Seas—and didn't?

. . . . that Art Young, savage cartoonist, couldn't keep awake when he was on trial for his own life?

"Gusto unflagging, wit perpetually effervescent, no lack of entertainment." —*Babette Deutsch, Nation*

"Like stepping into an old familiar room echoing with well-known and beloved voices . . . sufficient to arouse tears and cheers."
—*Herbert Gorman, N. Y. Times*

"Witty and profound, richly satisfying." —*Dallas Times*

"People are talking about the charm of Louis Untermeyer's FROM ANOTHER WORLD." —*Vogue*

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autobiographical excursions
FROM ANOTHER WORLD
$3.00

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beautiful, romantic novel of Stuart England—growing daily in popularity

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HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY, NEW YORK

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The Finest Novel in Many Years by

H. M. Tomlinson

1912
THE SEA AND THE JUNGLE
1919
OLD JUNK
1927
GALLIONS REACH
1930
ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

AND NOW—

A Novel of the London Docks, Fleet Street, the English Countryside, and the Open Sea

THE DAY BEFORE

A story with action, suspense, adventure, and drama such as Mr Tomlinson has not written since his famous *Gallions Reach*. A rich, colorful and important book by a man who, as Henry Seidel Canby says, has "one of the most beautiful and expressive prose styles of our times."

"The story holds interest . . . Conspicuously well written . . . The work of an impressive personality."—*Amy Loveman in Book-of-the-Month Club News.*

$2.50

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
2 W. 45th St., New York

Recipes for Neutrality

(*Continued from page 4*)

the cultural and democratic ideals of England than of Imperial Germany. Our native optimism and idealism, probably in part a product of our advancing frontier life and of our great natural resources and fortunate geographical isolation, made us genuinely believe in our mission to make the world safe for democracy—before later events made the very phrase a cause for cynical laughter. But those whose memories are good know that this idealism, as expressed in the President's speeches, was a very real thing to the men who went overseas and to those who stayed at home. As Alice M. Morrissey well says in her excellent study, "American Defense of Neutral Rights, 1914-1917": "American neutrality was never more than a legal status cloaking factual partiality for the Allies."

This American sentiment and idealism perhaps should be put at the head of the list, because it partly explains why we were more angered by German than by British disregard of our rights, why we were so shocked by German methods of war, and why our soil proved so much more fertile for Allied than for German propaganda.

4. Allied propaganda, highly successful because abundant and skillful, and still more because it fell on ears already conditioned to receptivity. German propaganda, on the other hand, clumsy and ineffective abroad then as today, was more of a boomerang than a success.

5. Economic influences — bankers, munition-makers, profit-seekers — which have been discussed above.

6. Fear for our own ultimate safety if the Kaiser should triumph in Europe—a fear that was emotionally increased by the appearance of German submarines in our waters and that was naturally stronger along the Atlantic seaboard than inland west of the Alleghanies.

In the discussion of peace legislation there are two important points on which opinions differ sharply: how far shall the President be allowed discretionary power, and whether the present embargo on munitions shall be repealed.

As to President Roosevelt's discretionary power, Mr. Grattan would have as little of it as possible.

> It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the President's power in foreign relations is tremendous in scope. It is a striking example of a delegation of powers under the republican theory of government which is fateful with disastrous consequences to the American people. . . . When President Roosevelt and his supporters demand that the curbs on his authority be removed that he may resume the traditional authority of his office, one can only be suspicious that the aim is to facilitate the job of getting this country into war. . . .

Messrs. Dulles and Armstrong think that if Congress wants to take the responsibility of legislating *ad hoc* to meet each and every particular situation as it arises, and is prepared to remain continuously in session for that purpose, it can almost eliminate Executive discretion altogether. But they also believe, absolutely correctly we are convinced, that

> the difficulties and risks of that course must be evident to anyone who thinks twice. And when Congress proposes to legislate in general for all wars, present and future, it should pause to study the experience of the past. Then it will realize that in this field the legislation of today is the headache of tomorrow. . . . As between the risk that the Executive may possibly abuse this discretion and the risk inherent in a policy which ties the Executive with legislative restrictions in the conduct of foreign policy, the former alternative seems to us preferable.

As to the embargo on munitions, Mr. Grattan's general line of thought seems to indicate that he wishes to retain it. But we do not find anything clearer and more definite on this point than his statement that our policy should include "the tight control [but not embargo?] of the export of arms, munitions, and all lethal weapons of whatever character with the aim of preventing the sale of them from becoming a reason for even deeper involvement in the fortunes of the nations purchasing them. This task shall be given to a strengthened Munitions Control Board." Dulles and Armstrong give a careful and clear summary of the arguments for and against repealing the embargo on munitions. Their conclusion, with which we are again in complete agreement, is that "the arms embargo should be eliminated from our neutrality legislation."

Sidney B. Fay, professor of history at Harvard, is the author of "Origins of the World War."

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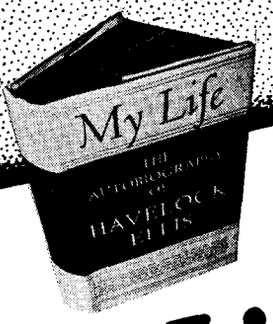
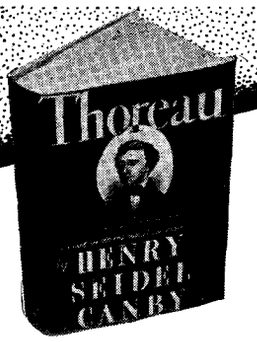


My Life

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
HAVELOCK ELLIS

"I SEE life, whole, coldly, nakedly, all around, and though I am glad it is over, though I would not live it again, yet now that I seem to view it whole I view it with joy, even with ecstasy."

THE overtones of "My Life" are those of a surpassing love story. In friendship and in passion it was given to Havelock Ellis to attract and hold the worship of women. Both for its frankness and for the extraordinary distinction of the writing, this book may well stand as one of the great autobiographies.
Illustrated, $3.75



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The Dilemma of Defense

OUR MILITARY CHAOS. By Oswald Garrison Villard. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1939. 202 *pp., with index.* $1.75.

Reviewed by R. ERNEST DUPUY

NEARLY three years ago—January 30, 1937, to be exact—*The Saturday Review* published a criticism of Major General Johnson Hagood's "We Can Defend America," in which this reviewer made the statement that the book contained "juicy missiles for pacifists to hurl." The chickens have come home to roost in Mr. Villard's latest work, a book rather difficult for a soldier to review, because of the temptation to leap into debate rather than analysis.

Perhaps the best start would be to examine Mr. Villard's keystone argument. Here it is, italics his:—

> *What will it avail us to arm to the utmost limit, to subordinate our national and industrial life to preparations for war, if thereby we lose our democratic soul—that soul we are supposed to preserve by pouring out armament expenditures without end?*

Mr. Villard is a sincere pacifist. He proved his sincerity during the years 1914-18, somewhat to his personal discomfort, if my recollection of those turbulent times is correct. Unfortunately, his type of pacifism revolves in a very narrow orbit, ignoring the realities of life, ignoring, too, the fact that American soldiers and sailors are themselves pacifists in the true sense of the word. In consequence, in his efforts Mr. Villard pulls back on the stage all the puppets and clap-trap of his stock in trade, making full use of the half-truth—always a favorite device in specious argument.

Upon General Hagood he leans heavily, perhaps more heavily than the General, himself a sincere, patriotic soldier, would like. For our higher command, both military and naval, Mr. Villard has little use. A literary Farragut, he steams against the tide of preparedness, damning not torpedoes but admirals and generals. "Given large military and naval establishments," he cries, "and some enemy invariably lurks round the corner." Again—"To be healthy and normal the Navy cannot exist unless it can prove that some other fellow menaces it and is building more ships than it has." *Vieux jeu,* Mr. Villard. What extensive military establishments have the Scandinavian countries? How fare the souls of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania?

An entire chapter is devoted to "The Huge Growth of Our Military Forces." Would it were true! The author nimbly skips the fact that even the present emergency increases authorized by the President merely provide for the Regular Army enlisted strength of 280,000—the strength provided in the National Defense Act of 1920, but not appropriated for by Congress. The Regular commissioned strength—Mr. Villard insists our Army is over-officered—is still some 4,000 below the 18,000 written into that Act.

Mr. Villard notes, as if it were something to be proud of, that at the outbreak of the World War we had no Officers' Reserve Corps and only a handful of enlisted Regular Army reserves. He forgets to mention the thousands of white crosses that stand today in mute testimony to that lack. In his zeal to prove our alleged overarmament he states flatly that "No less than eighteen infantry divisions [of National Guard] have been completely organized," a statement that falls somewhat short of truth.

He argues that armaments lead to fascism. One interesting proof—in his opinion—is the recent deportation by England of "the law-breaking members of the Irish Republican Army," which act, he holds, was "in direct violation of the principles of individual liberty of the citizen." One might well pursue the argument to the *reductio ad absurdum* that incarceration of criminals is equal violation of principles of individual liberty.

The American Legion comes under heavy fire from Mr. Villard in his efforts to decry any and all preparedness moves as pernicious. "Nazi stuff," is his appellation for remarks by the editor of the *Infantry Journal,* and by Major General Douglas MacArthur. He makes much of the unfortunate episode of General Moseley testifying before the Dies Committee.

One cannot help feeling that Mr. Villard in his most laudable zeal for peace has put the cart before the horse throughout the book. One quarrels not with his motives but with his opinions.

BORZOI BOOKS

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	Crime, Place, Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
A COFFIN FOR DIMITRIOS *Eric Ambler* (Knopf: $2.)	English detective-story writer in Istanbul fascinated by corpse fished from Bosphorus, traces its crime-stained past.	Nothing was too bad for Dimitrios, and his investigator's final discovery will make your eyes bug out.	Masterpiece

This is the first time in four years that the *Saturday Review of Literature* has called a mystery a masterpiece, and only the fourth time in the entire life of the *Saturday Review of Literature*

Australian Nature

KOONWARRA. By Charles Barrett. New York: Oxford University Press. 1939. 315 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by CLIFFORD H. POPE

ALTHOUGH Australia is the smallest of the continents, it holds greater interest for the naturalist than any other part of the world. Long isolation has allowed so many archaic types to survive there that it is justly called the land of living fossils. Not only are ancient groups of higher animals such as the marsupials dominant, but even among the invertebrates primitive forms prevail. The fierce, carnivorous bull-dog ants, for example, abound to represent the prototype of all ants.

For decades Charles Barrett has traveled over the island continent observing and photographing everything from the giant earthworm of Gippsland, which rivals the boa constrictor of the American tropics in length, to tree burials of Groote Eylandt aborigines. He stalked the duckbill platypus with camera in its native wilds and saw it tamed and living happily in a platypussary; on the Great Barrier Reef he observed *Tridachna,* the clam with a shell a mere yard long and powerful enough to hold a man imprisoned and helpless, to be drowned by a rising tide. Nothing escapes the notice of this trained naturalist, who writes without sentimentality in spite of being such an ardent lover of wild life that he has always used a camera instead of a gun. Some two-score excellent pictures testify to his skill with the former. Nearly a dozen additional photographs by H. T. Reeves and others are included. Among these are striking portraits of the spotted cuscus, the spiny anteater, a baby wombat, the tree-kangaroo, mother and son koalas, and the bearded dragon.

A tribe of Victorian aborigines, now extinct, called the stately black swan "Koonwarra." This swan, discovered by a party of Dutch sailors in 1697, was the first native Australian bird to reach Europe. Its euphonious name is well chosen for this book in which birds perhaps hold the center of interest. The presence of the author on every page and a seasoning of personal philosophy give an autobiographical tone to the whole book.

The format is pleasing and there is a good index.

Clifford H. Pope is the author of "Snakes Alive and How They Live."

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The New Books

Belles Lettres

ART IS ACTION. By Baker Brownell. Harpers. 1939. 231 *pp., with index.* $2.

"Poetry," Norman Pearson once remarked, "is a kick in the pants." Poetry, according to Mr. Brownell, is kinesthetic: a muscular activity. Art is living action; Art is getting in there and doing something yourself; Art is a kind of mental bicipital flexion. The Arts discussed in this book are Poetry, Cookery, Music, Costume, Dancing, Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Drama, Novel, Movie. Neither Gardening nor Dentistry is mentioned. There is a formidably long index, but this is less impressive than it looks: Mr. Brownell is an inveterate list-maker, and all the names (he devotes an entire page to a kind of Litany of Modern Poets) get into the index.

We cannot think that anyone will find the Brownell Theory either novel or subversive. It is the exposition of the theory that is suspect. When you are told, for instance, that the poetry of T. S. Eliot lacks nobility ("Murder in the Cathedral?"), generosity ("Animula?"), and kindness ("Ash Wednesday?"), you begin to wonder, not whether your informant has ever read Eliot, but whether he is intellectually and spiritually equipped to appraise Eliot. "Anna Hempstead Branch has written at least one poem, 'The Monk in the Kitchen', that deserves a place in the small but ancient list of mystical classics. Here it is order. How different from Jeffers!" How different, indeed. But this is hardly appraisal. It is not even description. It is the literary equivalent of a tour-conductor's megaphone-comment: On your right, ladies and gentlemen, is Hart Crane; six lines for him, because we've got to get on to Millay.

Its publishers confess that "Art Is Action" stimulates and provokes them. One is happy for the publishers, and at the same time a bit envious: it must be fun to be stimulated so easily.

D. F.

Fiction

THE DAYS ARE FLED. By Percy Marks. Stokes. 1939. 371 *pp.* $2.50.

As in Percy Marks's previous novels, the theme of this new one centers around the achievement of fruitful adjustment to the demands of life. But instead of dealing mainly with the problems of youth, this novel breaks some new and rather specialized ground. The central character is no ordinary mortal but a highly gifted musician. To attempt to deal with the issues of such a life is an ambitious undertaking.

The crucial issue of Stuart Shaw's life may have lain in the question of whose it really was. His father, recognizing his precocity in early boyhood, had determined to make him a virtuoso violinist. In the process, father and teacher drove the boy so relentlessly that they not only robbed him of his childhood and impaired his strength but broke something in his spirit as well. The result of the strain was a prolonged nervous prostration that nipped a promising career in the bud. And during the years of failure that followed, spent first in junketing from one small town to another with a lyceum troupe, later in teaching music at a girls' school in California, Stuart fell into an increasingly despondent inertia. Even when he and the wife and children he had acquired were raised by miraculous good fortune from poverty to comfort, he longed at first only to be able to sink into a passive, unproductive retirement.

It is for the novelist to tell what new forces brought direction to his gifts and meaning to his days, so that he ceased merely to exist and began to live. In developing the story, Mr. Marks writes of music and musical endeavor with a feeling that reflects experience and love. The novel does not project much emotional intensity, quicken the spirit by any unusual imaginative quality, or penetrate very far below the surface. But there is directness and warmth and sanity and homely humor in Mr. Marks's writing,

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE SMILER WITH THE KNIFE *Nicholas Blake* (Harpers: $2.)	Georgia Strangeways, venturesome wife of private investigator, skirts death to break up secret society that would Hitlerize England.	Nothing mysterious here. Simply an extraordinarily well written and entertaining thriller with Britons triumphant over skulduggery.	Exciting
STRANGERS' GATE *E. Phillips Oppenheim* (Little, Brown: $2.)	Struggle for control of Bauxite mines in mythical Balkan kingdom embroils heroic young Englishman, wicked German, and others.	Great amount of slick talk and intrigue leads up to few thrilling moments in mountain stronghold with precipitous exit. All ends well.	Old hat
THE MAN WITH THE MAGIC EARDRUMS *Harry Stephen Keeler* (Dutton: $2.)	Resident of Minneapolis mansion and shady nocturnal visitor indulge in recollections of murder, robbery, and what-not.	Garrulous gallimaufry involving condemned Negress in London, slain gangster in U. S. A., a pet skull, safe-blowing—and astounding finish.	*Echt* Keeler
THE PROBLEM OF THE WIRE CAGE *John Dickson Carr* (Harpers: $2.)	"Miracle murders" on English tennis court and flying trapeze not so miraculous, once rotund Dr. Fell starts deductive processes.	Explanation of first murder amazing; that of second strains credulity. Background for both satisfactory and characters well-drawn.	Good Grade-B

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and a spirit of affirmation which many will enjoy. Admirers of his previous novels, especially the musically inclined, should not be disappointed in his latest.

J. S. M.

ANOTHER CYNTHIA. By Doris Leslie. Macmillan. 1939. 346 *pp.* $2.50.

Cynthia, a name of the chaste moon-goddess, is the name perhaps ironically chosen by Miss Leslie for her heroine, a fictitious Nell Gwyn or Peg Woffington of the Regency period. (The author makes some pretence to having discovered some actual memoirs, but that is not really intended to deceive.) Cynthia Bright, the illegitimate daughter of a jovial alewife, was early seduced by an elegant young gentleman, and early befriended by a young man who goes about peddling quack medicines, but who seems to have a soul, and who certainly speaks a language, above his station. After Cynthia has run away from home and has become established on the stage with the ease of this type of heroine, these two men continue to appear, as her good and evil geniuses; and in the end it is revealed that the philosophic young quacksalver was indeed other than he seemed, and had been bent on learning how the other half lived. The secret meetings of the Luddites, to whom he introduces us, provide the book with its freshest material; but there is also plenty of good old-fashioned romantic atmosphere. Cynthia meets all the best people from William Cobbett to the Prince Regent, and from Byron to Mary Wollstonecraft, and moves through Kemble's London, Brummell's Bath, country fairs, and city gaols. The ginger-haired Cynthia is lively and full-blooded and the local color is (like her own, no doubt) warm in tone and if anything a little too thickly laid on. One would feel more confidence in those memoirs if the author did not make the mistakes of imagining that Cockneys transpose every H, and of supposing that the eighteenth-century long S was used at the ends of words as well as in the middle.

B. D.

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TIFFANY THAYER'S THREE MUSKETEERS. By Tiffany Thayer. Dial. 1939. 580 *pp.* $2.75.

It would be interesting to know, but difficult to find out, how many times the names of Athos, Porthos, and Aramis have been taken in vain since Alexandre the Great first launched the immortal three on their adventures. Mr. Tiffany Thayer now adds the latest title to that unmemorable list of imitations. Stimulated, according to the blurb, by the discovery that Dumas "suppressed" a curious historical fact, and fortified by research in "a thousand volumes, seven libraries across two continents" (what *could* that other continent be?) he has completely rewritten the tale of D'Artagnan and Milady in a wistful mixture of Harrison Ainsworth archaisms and the argot of the pulps. Just which of the extremely curious bits of history in this new version Dumas "suppressed" is not clear, though the chances are thirty-seven to one, by actual count, that it was scatological; but even without research there should have been no trouble in making a new book out of the old story, since the gusto which Dumas had for ringing steel and clattering hoofs, male swagger, and courage, and laughter, awakens in Mr. Thayer only when he comes, as he does come every few pages, to a bedroom. It does not matter that the historical backdrop is grotesquely flimsy, or that T. Thayer's three musketeers resemble those of A. Dumas rather less than they do the Ritz brothers; Mr. Thayer's unerring instinct has found the least common denominator of human entertainment for the seventeenth century and the twentieth as surely as the Minsky brothers would find it for ancient Rome. This is just the thing for people who like this sort of thing. We'll take straight Dumas, please.

G. M.

Miscellaneous

BARBARIANS WITHIN AND WITHOUT. By Leonard Woolf. Harcourt, Brace. 1939. 180 *pp.* $1.50.

The author of this slight treatise believes that since the world rocks with chaos we must immediately choose one of the alternatives which history, in its infinite periodicity, presents—civilization or barbarism. Civilization, of course, means justice, tolerance, enlightenment, knowledge, social objectives, and standards of values; barbarism, the opposite. Ancient Greece, and contemporary England, France, and Russia represent the former choice; Sparta, and contemporary Italy and Germany, the latter. England, France, and Russia cannot claim civilized completeness, however; the former two because their economic means do not serve civilized ends, and the latter because its political means result in a similar inadequacy. This

(*Continued on page* 22)

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

The Boston *Herald* Book Fair

THE Boston Book Fair, sponsored by the Boston *Herald* and coöperating booksellers, was a resounding success. The huge Boston Garden (a sporting amphitheater or colosseum) was well filled; if Boston's book-zeal grows any more numerous next year's Fair will have to go to the Harvard Stadium. ☞More than 60 authors spoke at the 12 sessions; distinguished chairmen presided; Robert B. Choate, Paul Waitt and Charles Lee did the honors on behalf of the *Herald*, and we heard many admirers express a special admiration for the little quilted surtout worn by gracious Miss Elise Lilley (of the Old Corner Book Store) who shepherded the anxious authors. ☞The Boston Garden is more elastic for such gatherings than the Public Library was; there is even a secret reservoir hidden upstairs where guests can be stirruped. ☞The Concord Antiquarian Society arranged as background for the speakers' platform a delightful replica of an 1860 sitting room. It must have given special pleasure to Dr. Canby when he spoke about Thoreau, for several of the furnishings belonged to Thoreau's family; also some to the Alcotts, Hawthornes, Channings, Margaret Fuller, and others. There was a Rogers group, and a whatnot with conch-shells, and an ancient Family Bible (open at Proverbs, to recommend brevity to the speakers). ☞To Mr. Richard F. Fuller and his energetic committee, as to the Boston *Herald* itself, warmest congratulations are in order. ☞Perhaps the most unexpected feature among the exhibits was Mr. Benton's supine and circumstantial nude *Persephone*, which had been blocking traffic on Fifth Avenue (at Brentano's) not long ago. ☞Perhaps the most surprised among the guests was Lin Yutang; he had been told he was to speak in the Boston Garden and expected an outdoor shrubbery of some sort. When he found himself in a vast sports arena, standing in a prize-ring converted to a Louisa Alcott parlor, he knew again what astonishing people Americans are. ☞But he was reassured by the large sign in the upper gallery, NO BETTING. ☞The sporting fraternity who hang about the Garden for hockey or pugilism and shrewdly estimate the take were completely buffaloed by this strange event, and wondered what was the racket. ☞Among the pleasant excitements of Old Q.'s brief visit to Boston was to help give Mr. Sterling North, literary editor of the *Chicago Daily News*, his absolutely first glimpse of New England. ☞Mr. North, rambling innocently among publishers' offices on Madison Avenue, was practically kidnapped by Frank Henry and Jim Schwenk. Under pretext of showing him the architecture of Grand Central Station they got him aboard the Yankee Clipper; and the next thing he knew he was eating scrod and admiring the whaling monument at New London. ☞Shortly after that he was calling for beans and brown-bread ice cream at the Parker House, and promising to go through all the recipes in Ken Roberts's niece's cookbook.

☞Mr. North has the makings of an excellent New Englander, it was a pity he had to take the Owl back that same night. ☞We tried to lure him to stay, offering him our own special demulcent, known to a very small and fastidious coterie, Lusty's Turtle Oil Shaving Soap. ☞This comes from John Lusty, Turtle Importer, of Limehouse, London; it was introduced to us by a saponophile at Harcourt Brace's; in the pressures of morning toilet Old Q. finds it soothing both in itself and in its power of suggestion. ☞He thinks, while razing, of the Bermuda buccaneers he once read about: when their ship's seams opened they caulked with a mucilage mixed of "lime and oil of tortoises." ☞Also he thinks of Aeschylus who was killed when an eagle dropped a tortoise on his bald pate, thinking it an outcrop of marble. ☞David McCord, by the way, was highly praised for his geniality as introducer at one of the Book Fair sessions. ☞We were much pleased, calling on Mr. Norman Dodge at Goodspeed's on Beacon Street, to see on his desk a copy of John Winterich's *23 Books* for which he has a sharp enthusiasm. Like ourself he thinks it one of this year's most sovereign Christmas presents for anyone who can detect blood-pressure in literature. ☞There was nothing of the turtle in Old Q.'s behavior however: he got around with considerable speed, and amused himself—coming back to N. Y. by airplane—by rereading *Monsieur Beaucaire*, a copy of which he had found secondhand for a dime. Tarkington's little pastiche or pâtisserie has dated beyond recognition. On page 3 we find "The Duke's mouth foamed over with chaotic revilement," which would astonish the author if he reread it. ☞But one line in *Monsieur Beaucaire*, by the oddity of subsequence, remains timely and refreshingly comic. On page 29—"A rose is a rose!"

☞In the plane from Boston Old Q. kept peering down to see if he could get a glimpse of the site of the new building of the G. & C. Merriam Company in Springfield, but the weather was thick. This is where, beginning next summer, the Webster's Dictionaries will be edited. The cornerstone was laid last month and Dr. W. A. Neilson, late of Smith College and editor-in-chief of the latest Webster spoke of "the binding force of common language" in this nation of many tongues. ☞Language indeed combines the caustic properties of the lime we mentioned and the cohesive smoothness and sloth of the turtle oil. ☞It is pleasing to remember that when the Merriams came to Springfield in 1831 they dealt not only in books and stationery but also in toothbrushes; very likely in the turtle shaving soap. ☞How about Merriam's getting out an airplane dictionary or phrase-book; for when a French lady in the plane was alarmed by what pilots call "tur-

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THE WEDDING RING

BY ELIZABETH HOLLISTER FROST

COWARD-McCANN

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bulence" (it was the day the gale blew plaster off the World's Fair trylon) the helpful stewardess was troubled. "My usual pep-talk isn't any good," she said, "because the lady only understands French." ☞In our best accent we tried to explain to the panicky soul, who was squawking in a manner very comic, "N'y a pas de danger, madame; soyez tranquille; voyez vous; l'air est plein de petits trous comme un fromage Suisse." ☞She became more anxious still.

☞We were pleased by what Archibald MacLeish said, in a recent address at the Library of Congress, about the puzzling effect European literatures sometimes have on American readers unfamiliar with the foreign background. "Even the American child reading European poems feels the strangeness: the seasons are wrong, the springs too early or too slow, the birds and animals different." ☞We are pleased to see increasing interest and enthusiasm for Clarence Streit's *Union Now* proposal for uniting 15 world democracies in a federation—"a practical first step toward democratic world government." We recommend your writing to the Inter-Democracy Federal Unionists, 445 West 23 Street, N. Y. C., for circulars, and read Streit's book.

☞Sheed & Ward's new catalogue says that an Irishman from Nebraska (Leo Richard Ward) has written a book which is not about the Somerville-and-Ross Irishman, nor the Stage Irishman, but "the Irish exactly as they are." It's called *God in an Irish Kitchen*. ☞An A. P. dispatch reports that air-conditioned trailers or Parnassi on Wheels are suggested to replace 61 sub-stations of the St. Louis Public Library.

The New Books

(*Continued from page* 20)

history and these times differ from others because the barbarians, instead of threatening at the gates, actually stand within the citadel. The solution lies in a proper blend of power, economics, and ideas, the three forces which motivate historical and social change. An improper blend of historical naiveté, sociological simplicity, and editorial importunity encourages the reader to respond with the weary sense of having heard it all before—especially before the Russo-German pact. R. B.

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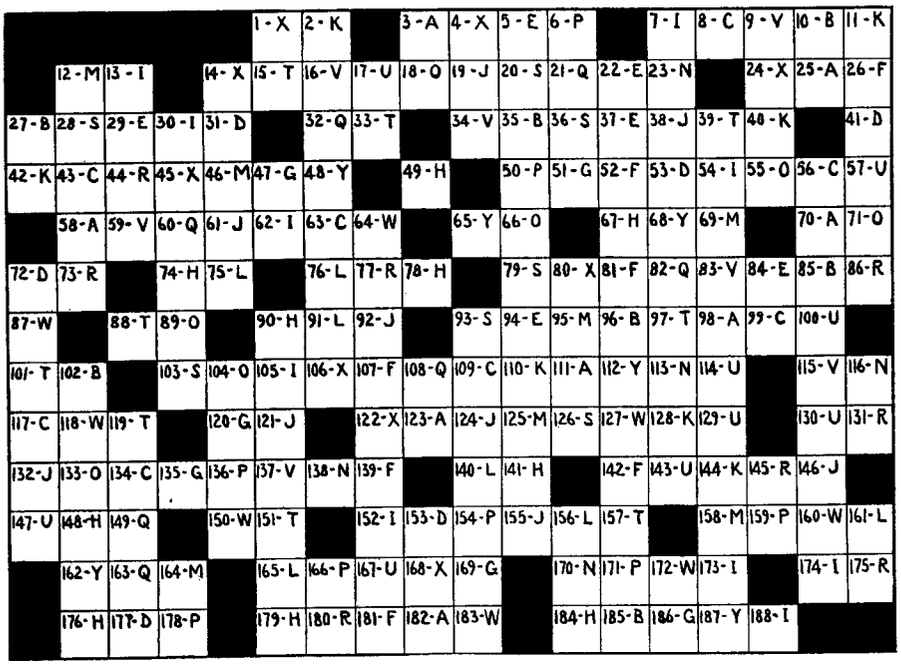
Double-Crostics: No. 293

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 21 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Idle talker.

B. Symphony by Mendelssohn.

C. Acted clumsily.

D. More succulent.

E. Author of "Life of Washington" (1783-1859).

F. Susceptibility in reaction to certain foods, etc.

G. Goddess of Dawn (Roman).

H. Clamorous.

I. Lampoon.

J. Supplicate.

K. London News Agency (1851-).

L. Poem by Arnold on Clough's death.

M. Trollope diamonds.

N. Cruder.

O. Bamboozle (Slang).

P. Type of untrue tale (2 wds.)

Q. Old Testament prophet.

R. Historical play (2 wds.)

S. Sound of repeated knocking (Comp.)

T. Poem by Wordsworth (1814).

U. Servitude, political subjection.

V. Novel by Scott.

W. Author of drama "A Man of Mode."

X. To the degree to which.

Y. Symphony by Mendelssohn.

WORDS

70	182	111	3	58	98	123	25
85	10	35	185	96	27	102	
56	8	43	134	99	63	109	117
153	53	41	177	31	72		
37	94	22	29	5	84		
107	142	52	26	81	181	139	
120	51	47	135	169	186		
141	176	179	78	184	74	67	49	148	90
105	152	30	7	62	174	13	54	173	188
38	124	19	146	132	121	155	61	92	
144	2	42	110	11	128	40			
76	91	156	165	75	140	161			
69	158	125	95	12	46	164			
138	113	170	23	116					
55	18	66	89	133	104	71			
171	136	6	154	166	50	178	159		
32	108	60	149	21	82	163			
73	180	175	145	44	131	77	86		
36	79	20	93	126	103	28			
151	15	97	39	119	157	101	88	33	
130	147	100	129	143	114	17	167	57	
9	34	137	83	16	115	59			
127	183	150	64	172	118	87	160		
1	106	14	80	45	122	4	24	168	
48	187	65	162	112	68				

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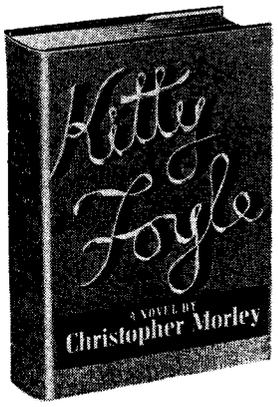

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